

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15

DRC-01 /142 W

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R 151315Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9711

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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TAGS: ELAB, SOCI, GW

SUBJECT: THE FUTURE OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE FRG

REF: BONN A-433; BONN 17155; ANKARA 0194; BELGRADE 0033

1. SUMMARY. IN RESPONSE TO SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT THE FEDERAL AND LAND GOVERNMENTS ARE CONTINUING TO TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN WORKERS ENTERING THE FRG. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO ENCOURAGE UNEMPLOYED FOREIGN WORKERS, CURRENTLY REPORTED AS 50,000, TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY

2. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT ROLE FOREIGN WORKERS WILL PLAY IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC IN THE FUTURE BECAUSE MANY SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS ARE INVOLVED. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT FEELS THAT FOREIGN WORKERS HAVE REACHED THE "SATURATION POINT" AND WANTS TO REDUCE THE FLOW INTO THE FRG. IT IS ALSO SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO ENCOURAGE UNEMPLOYED FOREIGN WORKERS TO RETURN HOME.

3. EVEN DURING THE TIME OF ECONOMIC BOOM AND OVEREMPLOYMENT, GERMANS WERE AMBIVALENT TOWARD THE PRESENCE OF 2.6 MILLION FOREIGN WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE FRG. ALTHOUGH THE UNIONS, EMPLOYERS, POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE GOVERNMENT AGREED THAT GERMANY NEEDED ADDITIONAL WORKERS, MOST GERMANS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF CREATING NEW ETHNIC AND CULTURAL MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN THE FRG. THIS CONCERN WAS THE BASIS FOR THE "ACTION PROGRAM" OF JUNE 1973 (BONN A-433) WHICH SOUGHT TO IMPROVE SOCIAL CONDITIONS FOR WORKERS ALREADY HERE AND TO "STABILIZE" THE SIZE OF THE FOREIGN WORKER POPULATION BY REDUCING THE NUMBER ENTERING THE FRG.

4. IN THE MONTHS SINCE JUNE THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROGRESSIVELY ACTIVATED THE PROVISIONS OF THE "ACTION PROGRAM" AND HAS TAKEN ADDITIONAL MEASURES NOT ANTICIPATED BY THE "PROGRAM" TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF WORKERS ENTERING THE FRG. THESE MEASURES INCLUDED RAISING IN SEPTEMBER THE FEE PAID BY EMPLOYERS FROM DM 300 TO DM 1,000 FOR EACH FOREIGN WORKER HIRED, SUSPENDING THE HIRING OF WORKERS FROM NON-EC COUNTRIES IN NOVEMBER, AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN DECEMBER, REDUCING THE LENGTH OF WORK PERMITS FOR FOREIGN WORKERS FROM TWO YEARS TO ONE YEAR. IN DECEMBER, CONSTRUCTION MINISTER VOGEL CALLED FOR A TAX ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN AREAS WHERE THEIR NUMBER IS GREATEST.

5. RISING UNEMPLOYMENT IS PROVIDING AN ADDITIONAL INCENTIVE TO FIND WAYS TO ENCOURAGE UNEMPLOYED FOREIGN WORKERS TO GO HOME. THE FEDERAL AND LAND GOVERNMENTS HAVE AGREED THAT

UNEMPLOYED FOREIGN WORKERS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IF THEY ARE DRAWING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND HOLD VALID WORK AND RESIDENCE PERMITS. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY FOREIGNERS MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS, BUT MANY DO NOT. RECENTLY THERE ARE REPORTS THAT A GERMAN LABOR MINISTRY DELEGATION IN BELGRADE HAS RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF ENCOURAGING FOREIGN WORKERS WHO DRAW UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN THE FRG TO RETURN HOME BY OFFERING THEM A "BONUS".

6. THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE EXISTING REGULATIONS WILL BE ENFORCED AND THE NUMBER OF NEW REGULATIONS PROMULGATED FOR FOREIGN WORKERS WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE LABOR MARKET.

7. THE EMPLOYMENT PICTURE IS BY ALL COUNTS WORSE THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE 1966-67 RECESSION. IN DECEMBER, 485,600 WORKERS, 2.2 OF THE LABOR FORCE, WERE UNEMPLOYED. THE UNEMPLOYED INCLUDED 50,000 FOREIGN WORKERS. SINCE UNEMPLOYMENT IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO INCREASE ON CAN ASSUME THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE FOREIGN WORK FORCE.

8. IN SPITE OF THE DETERIORATING EMPLOYMENT SITUATION, NEITHER THE UNIONS, PRESS, NOR POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE TAKEN AN UNSYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FOREIGN WORKERS ALREADY HERE.
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